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REPORT ON EXTERNAL TRAINING

MID-CAREER COURSE ON FOREIGN AFFAIRS

FOREIGN SERVICE INSTITUTE

1. Purpose of Course

The 1959 fall session of the Mid-Career Course on Foreign Affairs was held from 28 September to 18 December. Intended for Foreign Service officers of Classes 4, 5 and 6, the course is designed to provide these officers with the opportunity to: a) familiarize themselves with the latest theories of the social sciences and with practical methods of behavioral analysis; b) re-examine the basic American values and attitudes affecting the formulation of our foreign policy; c) become acquainted with the newer techniques of executive management; d) review significant factors in economic development, with special emphasis on Soviet economic growth and US assistance programs to developing countries; and e) learn of the roles played by other governmental agencies in the determination of American foreign policy. It is expected that this exposure to new ideas and concepts will serve to broaden the perspectives of students enrolled in the course and better equip them for the responsibilities involved in future assignments as senior officers. The fall session was attended by 20 Foreign Service officers, four of whom were women, plus one representative each from CIA, USIA, Navy and the Public Health Service.

2. Course Format and Methods

Although Mr. Harold Midkiff was serving as course chairman for the first time, the schedule for the fall session was, in the main, arranged by his predecessor, Mr. Edward Rivinus, and, as a consequence, did not vary greatly from the sessions immediately preceding it. It is unnecessary, therefore, to describe it in great detail. As usual, the first two weeks of the course were devoted to the study of executive management. Lectures, movies and case study discussions were all utilized as training methods, principal reliance being placed on the latter. These classes were held at the State Department's off-site training center in Front Royal, and the resultant communal living afforded class members an opportunity to get acquainted in the shortest possible time.

On its return to Arlington Towers, the class took up the study of social behavior, with emphasis on the use of various analytical methods and concepts, viz., cross-cultural or institutional, psychological attitudes, ideological legal norms, power or national interest, cybernetic analysis and, finally, decision making. The material was presented almost exclusively by lecture,

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and the major stress was on Far and Near East cultures. After four weeks of this, one week was devoted to international economic development, another week was spent on American social values and democratic traditions, and two and one-half days were given over to the study of Soviet economic development and political organization. Once again, the instruction was basically by lectures, coupled with class discussions.

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The next phase of the course consisted of a series of agency briefings, starting with a weekend visit to United Nations' Headquarters in New York City. Other briefings were given by representatives of the National Security Council ($\frac{1}{2}$ day), the Bureau of the Budget ($\frac{1}{2}$ day), the Joint Chiefs of Staff ($1\frac{1}{2}$ days), the International Security Affairs staff ($\frac{1}{2}$ day), the Advance Research Projects Agency ($\frac{1}{2}$ day), the National Indications Center ($\frac{1}{2}$ day) and the CIA (2 days). In addition, the class was addressed on several occasions by representatives of various bureaus of the Department of State and the USIA.

In addition to the regular reading assignments, students were required to participate in a seminar panel and a substantive review panel, and also to prepare a course thesis for written and oral presentation. My seminar panel dealt with the topic "Basic American Attitudes Towards Authority," and I was assigned to the substantive panel which reviewed the over-all governmental mechanism for foreign policy formulation. My course thesis was on the general subject of the role of the United Nations in international relations.

3. Evaluation of Training Techniques Employed

On the whole, the course material was presented in a very effective manner. Since my remarks here will, for the most part, be directed toward what I regarded as shortcomings, it should be borne in mind that they do not constitute a balanced picture.

As was mentioned above, the case study method was used extensively in the executive management studies at Front Royal. This technique was not wholly successful. The class was too large to permit full participation--four or five of the more aggressive students managed to hold the floor for much of the discussion time. The chairman of this phase of the course, Mr. Hilding Peterson, was serving in this capacity for the first time and sometimes let the discussion get out of hand, even to the point of degenerating into several private arguments conducted simultaneously. Mr. Peterson, it seemed, recognized this problem and towards the end of the period appeared determined to exercise more control over the group. Another common complaint was that too much time was

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// allotted to the discussion of individual case studies; long before the discussions terminated, students were reduced to repeating observations and opinions which had been adequately explored by previous speakers. The movies used were very worthwhile (I can supply the titles if necessary), and at least half of the lectures were good. It might be mentioned that I had finished OTR's two-week, half-time management course shortly before my assignment to the Mid-Career Course. It is my opinion that, despite the limited time and money available, the OTR course was more intellectually stimulating, broader in coverage, and more varied in presentation techniques than its Foreign Service Institute equivalent. Moreover, student participation in the OTR course revealed a more mature appreciation of problems encountered by the administrator.

The secondary objective of the Front Royal sojourn was to practice a little "togetherness." This objective was achieved almost perfectly. Many firm friendships were established and everyone got acquainted, in a general way, with everyone else. This alone probably justified the expenditure involved in transporting the class to Front Royal.

25X1A // The materials on the behavioral sciences, cultural patterns, economics, etc., were presented almost exclusively by lectures, followed by general discussions. Nearly all of the lecturers (drawn mainly from university ranks) were both well informed and articulate, presenting their subject matter in an interesting and provocative fashion. I would rate at least six of the speakers as excellent; only two or three were dull. Incidentally, the lecturers from the Foreign Service Institute staff were all of high calibre. The two lecturers from the CIA, [REDACTED] and [REDACTED] acquitted themselves very well indeed. The course would have been improved if more time had been devoted to their respective subjects. The class discussions which followed the lectures were usually good; certainly there was no dearth of spontaneous questions and comments. It must be admitted, however, that the contributions from the class were not always germane or of general interest. In addition to the formal discussion periods, students had an opportunity to converse with the guest lecturers during the coffee breaks and lunch hours. Initially, this seemed like an excellent idea; however, in actual practice these conversations seldom concerned the lecture topic but tended instead to revolve about such subjects as the pros and cons of a Foreign Service career, future assignments, Washington's high cost of living, the shortcomings of TV programming, ad inf. Often the guest lecturer, obviously bored, played the role of passive observer, detaching himself from the group whenever the opportunity to do so presented itself.

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One very effective stunt was staged. One morning Mr. Midkiff announced to the class that the scheduled lecturer, Mr. Paul Conroy of USIA, was unable to appear. As a substitute, Mr. Midkiff had obtained the services of Ivan Serov, an official of the USSR Chamber of Commerce, who would speak to the class on his impressions of the US. Following Serov's remarks, a somewhat tense discussion was held, during which class members were unable to dent either Mr. Serov's convictions or composure. Just before the coffee break, Midkiff exposed "Serov's" real identity--Paul Conroy of USIA, the man who had been responsible for training American guides for the US Exhibition in Moscow. It was quite a traumatic experience for all of us to realize how completely we could be fooled.

The agency briefings varied greatly in kind and quality. Some took place at the Foreign Service Institute, and in other instances the class visited the agency itself. Visiting the actual installation was time-consuming but worthwhile in some cases, e.g., the National Indications Center and the United Nations, in that the students caught some of the atmosphere surrounding the activity. It is a pleasure to report that it was the consensus of the class that the CIA briefings were the best of the group, from Paul [redacted] very polished and comprehensive introduction through the impressively staged final meeting with Inspector General Kirkpatrick. The only criticism which I heard was that there was some repetition; several of the briefers described in some detail the relationships between the case officer, his principal agent and the actual field operatives. The Foreign Service people were

[redacted]
Not all of their objections were met, but at least some of the complexities were explained in a clear and logical manner. Most of the students seemed favorably disposed toward the agency prior to the briefings, and certainly the straightforward way in which their questions were answered served to strengthen this attitude. The treatment at CIA was in stark contrast to that accorded them in the Pentagon briefings, where little information was disclosed not already available in the press. I have one suggestion to make with respect to the CIA briefings. While the main emphasis is placed on covert operations--and properly so--it should be remembered that these officers frequently serve tours in Washington and therefore are quite interested in the activities of DD/I offices. Six of the 20 Foreign Service officers in the class just completed are serving their next tours in Washington. I think that if it could be arranged to have the class visit one of our "County Fair" exhibitions for an hour or so the time would be well spent.

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The seminar and substantive review panels were not of great value. Four students served on each seminar panel, preparing a one-hour oral presentation on the assigned topic, which was followed by another hour of discussion. The substantive review panels were not greatly dissimilar from the seminar panels; they followed the formal lectures on a general topic and were supposed to review what had been presented, at the same time introducing supplementary materials related to the same subject. In actual practice it was difficult to tell one from the other. The participants devoted much time and effort to these presentations, but more often than not the results were disappointing to the student body. I understand that the substantive review panels will be discontinued in future sessions. The course thesis amounted to an exercise in the use of one of the analytical methods developed during the course. The method of presentation was what was emphasized, rather than the substantive content of the paper. The papers were limited to 5,000 words and no sourcing was required. Students were assigned a general topic--four students per topic--and then each student was free to select a subtopic to investigate and the analytical method to use. Actually, some of the so-called analytical methods were not really methods at all, but simply descriptions of the subject matter to be explored (e.g., institutions, psychological attitudes, ideological norms); the students, therefore, tended to select a "method," and then choose a subtopic which fitted into the method. In addition to preparing the paper, each student made a 20-30 minute oral presentation. On the whole, students did a better job on this than they did on the panels; some of the presentations were quite lucid and interesting. It is my opinion that the oral and written presentation of a course thesis served a useful purpose in helping the course chairman evaluate the potential of the student. The panels, on the other hand, were superfluous, consuming 48 hours of class time which could have been more profitably spent.

4. Value of Course

The Mid-Career Course, as constituted at present, comes very close to fulfilling the purposes outlined at the start of this report. It fell short in two respects: inadequate attention was devoted to contemporary American trends in politics, literature and the arts (much needed, in my opinion), and to the Sino-Soviet bloc. If CIA should decide to establish a similar course for agency personnel, much of the Foreign Service Institute's program could be adopted, with only minor modifications.

I feel that I benefited in many ways from the course, although most of these benefits were of an intangible nature and have no

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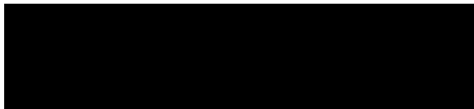
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practical application to my present job. The phases of the course which will be of direct help to me in my position include: a) the bulk of the executive management lectures; b) the agency briefings, particularly the CIA, INR, NSC, JCS and Bureau of the Budget sessions; and c) certain of the lectures, e.g., those dealing with developments in the USSR, and Dr. Wallace Brode's talk on the role of the US science attaches. Many of the lectures on the behavioral sciences dealt with cultural patterns of the Near and Far East. An analyst specializing in Indian, Chinese, Japanese or Arab affairs would profit more from this part of the course than would someone working in my area (Eastern Europe). If direct application of training to one's current job is considered important, this might be kept in mind in making future assignments to the course.

Of less practical application, but nonetheless of possible future benefit, was the fact that, as a result of 12 weeks of continuous contact with the other students, I gained a rather thorough knowledge of how the Foreign Service operates and an appreciation for the problems faced by Foreign Service officers in their daily work. Likewise, I believe that the Foreign Service officers take a more sympathetic view towards CIA as a result of the attendance of Agency representatives at each session.

In summation, I believe that, owing to the diverse subject matter covered by the Mid-Career Course, any Agency employee participating could acquire knowledge which would be of practical value to him in his work. Moreover, he would find the course a refreshing change of pace from his daily routines and would emerge from the school feeling mentally stimulated. In addition, it is my conviction that the very fact that the CIA is interested enough to send representatives to every course engenders good will towards the Agency among the students and the staff. If the CIA representative does well in the course, which I understand has been the rule in past sessions, the Foreign Service officers' respect for Agency employees in general is enhanced. For these reasons I urge that the Agency continue its practice of assigning representatives to each session of the Mid-Career Course.



Biographic Register, OCR
15 January 1960

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<p>I have checked the paras. that would be of interest to us -</p> <p>3-5: A darned good report from an OCR employee, covering the period when, reportedly, there was some unfavorable reaction to the Agency.</p>					
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